RAGGED SCHOOL UNION QUARTERLY RECORD.

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RAGS AND THEIR REMEDIES.

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Those who have noticed the growth of the forest trees may often have observed how one tree is divided just above its trunk into two large branches, each almost a separate tree, yet both alike dependent on one trunk, and springing from the same roots.

The Eastern and Western Ragged Schools of Plymouth may be compared to such a tree as this. The root, the trunk are the same, and the twin branches are alike beautiful with leaves and flowers and fruit.

Almost all great enterprises, whether moral, social, or political, have had more than one who helped, at least, in their earliest formation. Great thoughts for the welfare of others occur to many minds almost simultaneously, and the outcome very often is a plan for the advancement of the masses, which, by-and-by, is perhaps not unnaturally claimed by half a dozen different originators. Before the idea of opening day schools for the instruction of the ragged children of Plymouth had been conceived, the late Mr. Shillabeer devised the scheme of gathering this class of children together on Sundays. In this project he was heartily seconded by Mr. John Taylor as teacher, and supported by Mr. J. N. Bennett, to whom he had been recommended, and with whose character such work was in perfect harmony. A room was engaged and the school commenced.

The awful visitation of cholera in 1848 necessitated the temporary abandonment of this school.

Without knowing of what had already been done, Mr. Eldred Brown, who has often been playfully called the "Father of Plymouth Ragged Schools," watched the neglected children from his parlour window as they played in the street, and thought to himself, "Why should we not gather them together and teach them?"

Being a man of great energy and of means, and well seconded by one of his partners in business, he at once spoke to his friends about the matter, only to make the discovery of the work accomplished on a small scale, and on Sundays only. A town's meeting was called, and a committee formed, of which Mr. Bennett became president for some years, and was succeeded by Mr. Brown, who still holds that office, and whose love for Ragged Schools burns more and more brightly, though his ill-health prevents his taking any longer the active part he so usefully performed in past years. A Ladies' Committee was afterwards added for each branch, while the General Committee managed the united affairs of both branches.

The second rule of the Plymouth Ragged School Association reads thus: "The object of the Association shall be to establish and maintain Free Schools for poor and destitute boys and girls, and for giving them moral and religious instruction, based on the teaching of the Holy Scriptures, as well as to promote industrial training when classes can be formed for such purposes."

The Eastern Branch.

A Day School having been determined upon, a room was hired for twelve months in Vauxhall Street and a schoolmaster engaged, and the number of the children in attendance was about fifty, when just thirty years ago an important purchase was effected, and the Plymouth Ragged Schools attained a permanent local habitation. A plain, unpretentious, but roomy brick house, situated in a very narrow street, bearing the euphonious name of "Catte," since changed to Stillman Street, in a thickly-populated part of the ancient and historical town of Plymouth, became the nucleus of the work, and a new master, Mr. James Rowse, appeared upon the scene, and took up his abode on the premises as teacher of the boys' school and general superintendent.

There have been many Ragged School teachers in London and

the provinces who have devoted themselves to their work with a noble enthusiasm, an untiring zeal, a ready sympathy, and a heart full of love to God and man. Such teachers have wrought grand results amongst the poor children over whom they have exercised their authority.

Mr. James Rowse has proved himself second to none in these characteristics. Blessed naturally with a playful, sunny, hopeful temperament, a most benevolent countenance, and a musical voice, his thoroughly Christian character, his unwavering firmness, and a stock of patience that has very rarely failed him, have unitedly enabled him to control his troublesome children, and to win the love and respect of all of them.

A Stunning Story.

A good illustration of Mr. Rowse's influence over his boys is to be found in the following true history.

"Tom," said a boy on the quay of the old town, to another boy who was lounging there as if it was the sole business of his young life—"Tom, will you go to school?"

"School!" replied the boy, with all the contempt of his age and bringing up, "not I; there's nothing to go to school for."

"Oh! but there is," said his friend, "and you're a stupid if you don't go. Do come, Tom; master's telling such a stunning story."

"What?" The apathy had gone from Tom's air.

"You'd like it, I know you would. Just come and hear a bit."

"Yes, I like stories dearly," said Tom, "if they're stunning ones;" and the boys went off together. Tom heard the portion of the story, and liked it as much as his friend expected; but he was vexed to find he could not hear any more for some days. But then he was welcomed so kindly, or, as he expressed it, he was taken so much notice of by the master, that he took to going regularly. It was a new thing to him to be taken so much notice of by anybody. His father was a poacher, and spent most of his time in jail; his childhood had been neglected, but gradually a wonderful change was wrought.

He came to the simple service held for the children for fourteen years on Sunday evenings, and at one of these meetings he wept because he was a sinner. Henceforth his career was eminently

useful—freely he had received, freely he gave. He filled places of trust in business, and his leisure he occupied as a tract distributor and in carrying on mission work. Early in his life he was the means of rescuing two other boys of the gutter class, to which he had formerly belonged. He is now engaged as a commercial traveller.

Divisions of Work.

Two rooms were devoted at Catte Street to industrial work, where shoemaking was taught, wood was cut up, clothes-pegs were made, and tins for night-lights. At first it had been intended that these two rooms should be used as a refuge, but the accommodation was too limited. A shoeblack brigade was also kept at work, and other boys carried posters through the town. The earnings in this department amounted at one time to over forty pounds in the year. Under Mr. Rowse's management the day school rapidly increased, and he had soon an average attendance of almost two hundred out of nearly three hundred who were on his books. The girls' and infants' schools, which were well conducted by their respective teachers, had about a hundred each in daily attendance, with almost twice as many on the books.

Mr. Rowse was not content with the five days a week he had to give to the education of the children, who were at first as unpolished as ill-dressed, and possessed as little notion of cleanliness as possible. But he worked Sunday after Sunday as superintendent of the Sunday-afternoon School in the heartiest, most genial manner, winning the regard of his teachers, who gathered around him from almost every section of the Christian Church, as well as gaining an additional and blessed influence over his scholars.

Three rooms, besides class-rooms, were thus utilised on the Sabbath, and in the Bible Classes and classes of growing-up girls and boys scholars were retained who would otherwise have been lost sight of. Mothers' Meetings, a Clothing Club, and Sewing Classes have all been carried on, and every Friday two ladies have a Meeting for the young of both sexes, to give them a Bible lesson and sing hymns. This is very popular, and productive of much good. Another fruitful means of keeping the boys especially has been the Evening School during the winter months for men and boys, which began at once, and is still carried on with even more than its former efficiency. A tea is provided at the end of

the season, for which the members themselves pay. Nothing is charged for education, but during their attendance they are expected to pay twelve pennies for the tea, and the first penny is required on the night of entrance. About a hundred attend this school, and it is taught by ladies and gentlemen of the town. These tea meetings are always very pleasant occasions. At one of them the opportunity was taken to present Mr. Rowse with a very handsome plated inkstand. Years before the Kyrle Society introduced the idea of beautifying the homes of the poor, and strewing flowers along the pathways that are too often prickly with thorns, some lady teachers used to furnish a button-hole bouquet of primroses and violets for every one of the attendants at the evening school tea. It need not be written that these were warmly appreciated, and beautified the tables before they were requisitioned for the coats and jackets of the scholars. A monthly Temperance Meeting of a social character is held by the two Bible Classes for men, at which they give readings, read essays, sing melodies and hymns, and unite agreeably in discussion.

Bazaars.

Early in the history of the Plymouth Ragged School Association a devoted Baptist minister, the late Rev. Samuel Nicholson, preached a sermon in its behalf, and pressed upon the attention of the young the claims of the society. A schoolgirl listened, and thought, What can I do? And, as she thought, the idea of a bazaar amongst her young companions presented itself. After a consultation with Mr. Rowse the matter was referred to some ladies of the committees, and a bazaar was successfully held—not in one of the schoolrooms, as the modest originator had expected, but at the Royal Hotel.

For eighteen years a most successful effort of this kind was perseveringly made annually, which added very materially to the funds. Mesdames Clark, Brown, Adams, Hopkins, Bayly, and many others, aided largely in this good work.

Fruit.

After a generation has passed away, fruit of such an enterprise may fairly be looked for. "Instead of the fathers shall come up the children," and many children of old scholars actually attend the Ragged Schools in Plymouth on Sundays.

The child of a drunkard, whose mother provided no home for her worse than orphan boy, acted well at school under Mr. Rowse, and became a monitor. Next he obtained a situation as errand-boy, and conducted himself so well that he was permitted to occupy at night a loft belonging to his master. This loft became a precious place of prayer to the lad, and his character reflected the sincerity of his changed heart. A friend of his master, at a distance, requested that gentleman to recommend him a youth of good principle, and he was chosen. Years passed away, and the once homeless errand-boy was taken into partnership. Then he succeeded his late master, and he is now a successful merchant, who, writing recently to invite his old schoolmaster and friend, Mr. Rowse, to visit him, offered to send his carriage to the station to meet him if he would only come.

This story may seem more like the pages of romance than sober truth, and yet the annals of Ragged Schools are not destitute of many such. But what is more satisfactory still is the number of upright, sober, God-fearing men and women living honest, noble lives as working men and women, who point back with loving gratitude to the influences of the Ragged School. There have been many disappointments; there are many lives apparently untouched by the good influences that once surrounded them; the drink curse has been too terrible a temptation to many, and has dragged them back into the slough from which they had temporarily emerged; but there are splendid sheaves of golden grain lying in the granary of the Plymouth Ragged School Association; and there are other ears of corn of which God only knows, some here, some there, and some already garnered everlastingly. On distant shores; in our Colonies, on our merchantmen, in men-of-war, and in the regiments of soldiers there are men whose hearts beat kindly for Catte Street Ragged School, and who, when they come to Plymouth, love to meet their teachers, who showed them they were not uncared for, and to grasp the hand of Mr. Rowse and bless him for all that he did in the old days long ago.

Letters speed across the ocean from far distant lands to thankful, happy teachers, telling them of determination on the part of old scholars to keep the pledge and to follow Christ; and rarely does one come in which Mr. Rowse's name is not mentioned.

Others at home are taking their part in Sunday School teaching;

some having classes at King Street in the morning, while they still attend their Bible Classes at Catte Street in the afternoon. Others are doing mission and temperance work, and not the least important work is done by those who carry the high principles they have learnt into their daily occupations, ennobling toil, and elevating duty into religion.

The Western Branch.

The work on Sundays was inaugurated, as we have seen, in this part of the town years before the daily instruction was undertaken in the east. I am indebted to Mr. Taylor, the untiring, loving, zealous superintendent of the afternoon Sunday School, who taught in it from the beginning, for the subjoined sketch respecting it.

King Street Ragged School.

The movement originated in the opening of a Sunday School nearly forty years ago in the neighbourhood of Stonehouse Lane, a part of the town regarded as the refuge of the very poor and destitute, and the temporary abode of a class who get a precarious living by attending country fares and revels, tramping from town to town, some leading a half gipsy life in caravans or low lodging houses.

The first promoters were a few teachers from the Congregational Church in Batter Street; but these obtained the co-operation of Christian workers from other churches, and the work has always been strictly unsectarian, the sole object being to elevate and improve the neglected children of a despised and disreputable portion of the town.

In those days the children gathered were literally *gutter children —shoeless and ragged*, with *unwashed faces* and *uncombed hair*. Some of them homeless street arabs—raw material indeed for benevolent and Christian workers. Rough and abandoned characters (sometimes for mere mischief) would enter the small room, *over a coal store and donkey stable*, where the school was held, and annoy and interrupt the teachers. In those days there was little protection, no police-station in the neighbourhood, and the locality was sadly neglected. Perseverance in the good work, however, and the

kindly interest taken in the younger children, soon won for the teachers the good wishes of the elders, and opposition died away Difficulties were great, but patience and perseverance overcame them. The children soon discovered that the teachers were their best friends.

On the formation of the Ragged School Association in the town, this Sunday School was merged into the new movement, and removed to new premises. These have since been acquired by the School Board, but the Sunday School is still sustained with energy and with good results. About two hundred boys and girls, and an infant class of eighty, receive instruction every Sunday.

The two superintendents, Mr. John Taylor, who succeeded Mr. Shillabeer as superintendent in the afternoon, and Mr. Thomas Heath, who succeeded the first morning superintendent, Mr. Payne, have each had long tenures of office. Mr. Taylor is one of the pioneers of the movement, having been identified with the school from the beginning, and he is able to point with pleasure to some scholars who are the children of those who themselves in their childhood were trained in the school.

Some of the teachers have for many years been constant and regular attendants, and they also refer with gratitude to the many instances of real good which have been, under the Divine blessing, the fruit of their labours. Boys and girls from homes the most wretched, and surroundings the most vile, are now occupying positions of usefulness in society, and many are engaged in happy Christian work. *On the roll of teachers may be found members of different denominational churches, who, sinking their sectarian differences, are working in harmony for the common good.*

Pure literature is largely distributed amongst the children.

That the beneficial influence of the school has been recognised and appreciated even by some from whom little sympathy might be expected, is evident from the fact that the children of known *Atheists* are sent regularly to the school.

One too well-known and notorious character, recently dead, who carried on for many years a clever system of swindling as a begging-letter impostor (of which he was ultimately convicted, and for which he suffered imprisonment), used to send two very interesting little boys. Their attendance was always punctual; they were remarkable for their cleanly condition and good be-

haviour, which contrasted very much with some of their schoolfellows. The father always received the visits of the teachers kindly and respectfully, and was profuse in his professions of thankfulness for the interest exhibited towards his children. The mother we never saw or heard much of. The boys, as they grew up, broke away from the home influence and left the town. The father finished his wicked career of deception (which he practised almost to the last), dying in a miserable hovel a few years ago. The sons are reported as respectable and doing well, and there is good reason to believe that the seed sown in their young hearts in the King Street Sabbath School is now bearing excellent fruit.

The children of this school being of a more migratory character than those around Catte Street, and the absence of Bible Classes, has led to greater difficulty in tracing their later careers. Mr. Taylor and his teachers have also promoted the settlement of their older scholars, as they grew somewhat polished and prepared, in other Sunday Schools, belonging to different denominations. A very large number of the King Street boys enter the navy, and sometimes their kind superintendent sees a stalwart sailor coming towards him, and hears the now familiar words, "You don't know me, sir? but I have good reason to know you. I am"— And then follow the name and particulars of early life, and Mr. Taylor recalls the boy's face he can hardly trace in the bronzed and manly countenance before him.

"I got a paper from Plymouth once, sir," a sailor said to him one day, "and I read your business advertisement over and over, it seemed so good to see the name again and to think of old times." This was surely a reason for advertising which the good superintendent had not dreamt of.

A Face in an Album.

One day Mr. Taylor was looking over the pages of a lady's album. "Surely I know that face," he said, as he paused at the likeness of a young minister. He was told the name. Yes, sure enough this Wesleyan missionary, as he now discovered him to be, was one of his boys, of poor parentage, but gentle, docile, tractable from the first—a very good boy, who appreciated every kind act done to him, who early became serious and gave his heart to God, and this was the blessed outcome.

A Blue Boy.

Jemmy Blue was not given this name from the colour of his skin, but from the hue of a ragged frock he wore. He was a poor little fellow without home or habitation of any kind, a literal dweller in the streets of Plymouth, his only bed the boilers in an ironfounder's yard. He was once tempted by some young companions to commit a burglary with them; but no, Jemmy had been to the Ragged Sunday School, and he had learned the sinfulness of sin. He refused. Two of his companions were caught in the act and committed to prison.

Left Behind.

A poor little fellow, when only three or four years old, was found alone in an empty room, which his unfeeling parents had just quitted. The landlord and landlady, going up to see in what condition the apartment was, discovered the poor little creature, its sole contents. He grew up a sharp little fellow, was sent to the Ragged School, and the man, who let him live in his house, reported: "He is getting on capitally, Mr. Taylor; he reads like a parson!"

The Gipsy Girl.

Amongst Mr. Taylor's scholars were many of the children of a gipsy father and mother, who possessed a small tribe of their own, numbering no less than twenty-one. One of the girls, a dark-skinned, black-eyed child, came for some time, and was as sharp as a needle, and remarkably clever. She is a woman now, and married to the keeper of a travelling show.

The Day School work in the west, first in Octagon Street and then in King Street, where there were built commodious school premises, since purchased by the School Board, was carried on with great success under their respective teachers. An efficient Band of Hope was at one time instituted, and conducted by the then teacher, Mr. Saunders. Mr. Ruse, who succeeded him, still works in the same school as a respected and successful certificated teacher under the School Board. The number of children attending the school was not quite so large as at Catte Street, except that of infants, which was considerably larger, the school having much better accommodation in that department.

Examinations.

The yearly examinations of both branches of this goodly tree of knowledge were extremely interesting. The general intelligence and acquaintance with the Scriptures manifested by the scholars were admirable, and the practical arithmetical questions which Mr. Brown and his partner, Mr. Nicholson, delighted to put to them were smartly answered. The singing was excellent, and the behaviour would, after the first few years, bear favourable comparison with that of any school.

The United Treat.

"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Mr. Eldred Brown and his friends decided in the very early days of the movement that these children must have an annual holiday; and for years, almost without exception, the scene of the treat has been a grand stretch of moorland known as Roborough Down. When almost a thousand children from the two schools had to be taken out and brought back in a train, to most of them their one railway ride in the year, and furnished with a good substantial tea, which was often to them dinner, tea, and supper in one, the work involved was by no means light. It is no exaggeration to say that for many hundreds of men and women who passed through these schools the two words "Roborough Down" touch a chord that can awaken pleasant memories, and a holiday feeling, and a blessing on those who were kind to them in those far-off days. There were little ones from crowded alleys whose only taste of country enjoyment came to be associated with grand old granite tors and purple heath flowers, and sunlit valleys, and merry races over soft springy turf, and sweet singing about the great good God and the kind and gentle Jesus in the fresh moorland air. And oh! what cheers they gave when the hymns were over for their teachers, and for Mr. Brown, and for the Queen, before they started for the station, and how they roared and yelled and screamed and shouted in the tunnels, which had a weird fascination for them, as something too mysterious to be understood! And how they sang! as if lungs were imperishable, often parodying verses to suit their happy day. Memories of little voices for ever silenced, of lads and girls whose young lives are ended, for whom Roborough Down presented nearly all they had of healthy enjoyment in this world, come

crowding to our minds. Life is true, and pure, and good, inasmuch as we live for others. Nothing but satisfaction respecting these treats can accompany the reflections of those who enabled the united Ragged Schools in the past to visit the Down, and who still enable the Sunday and evening scholars to have so enjoyable a holiday.

It may be forgiven to the thoughtful lovers of children, and especially to those who are interested in these poor little waifs and strays of humanity, who as much need the love and care of Christian friends as ever the flowers need light and air, if they sometimes question whether our present Education Act, good as it is, might not wisely have continued the very efficient machinery for reaching and elevating this class which Christian philanthropy had already devised. Hearts as well as heads require education and instruction. We may bring children up to fourth standards of intellectual attainment without eliciting love and faith and hope, and without assuring them of sympathy with their poor little struggling lives.

But let us be comforted. In the evening and on Sundays, at least, we may still gather them around us, and continue the dear old work of the Ragged Schools.

CONFERENCES OF RAGGED SCHOOL TEACHERS.

In the January number of this serial was published an account of one of four Conferences on Ragged School work. We now proceed to give particulars of the second and third of those important gatherings.

INDUSTRIAL WORK,

the subject of the second conference, was discussed on 11th October, in one of Mr. George Holland's class-rooms.

E. E. Ashby, Esq., C.C., and for many years a Ragged School worker, who presided, said: I reckon the day for controversy is past as to the need of Ragged Schools. We meet to confer as to how we can best promote the object we have in view. It might be possible for some one dwelling in a grand square in the West End to sit at home and say, "What a nice, clean, happy world!" But we know, and plenty besides us, that there exists something else in London than wealth, comfort, learning, and pleasure. We are conscious that in the middle of London, the seat of mighty power, of great wealth, of true religion, the seat of all the missionary societies—that there is to be found, even in that London, many thousands who are worse

than the heathen. Worse than poor, for plenty of us are poor and none the worse for that—worse than poor, worse than heathens—animals, simply animals, two-legged animals. Doubtless they enjoy life in a way, they enjoy a game of cricket in the street among the mud, but mental or religious knowledge they have none. What a sad state of things! Must it be so? Because London is an aggregation of so many millions, because it is so vast, because it is so wealthy, because we are so great, must there be this multitude out of sight, behind our backs, in absolute and blank ignorance of the merest rudiments of morality—in utter wretchedness and misery? Must it be so? The Christian heart, touched by the love of God, says, "Not if I can help it. And I will go forward and try to help it." Take the heathen; they worship idols at any rate, they have some reverence. But these heathen of our streets are worse than the heathen; they have no idea of the very existence of a God. They have no reverence, no knowledge, no moral perception, no life—no real moral or mental life. We go about and find these poor things, and is it not pity rather than anger that moves us when they are rude, when they throw mud in our faces? They know no better; they have no light, no knowledge of anything higher. When you think of their present darkness your heart must be moved by pity. What we want is to teach them something better—to impart a desire for higher pleasures and pursuits.

But there is another class we meet with. It is different from these. It is the wilfully bad, those who have wilfully gone into evil ways, who have graduated in the devil's school. And they have gained in that school much knowledge of evil. They are more trouble to us than the other class. But if we let them alone, who is to reach them? The policeman cannot touch them, the School Board cannot reach them; nothing but Christian love can reach them at all. Hence the burden of both classes lies upon the disciples of Jesus Christ, who must take up the work and do what they can.

Now comes this practical question, Will Sunday School work be sufficient? Is it enough to get them to attend Sunday School, to teach them for an hour once a week and turn them loose for a week's instruction in evil? Is it enough? (No, no.) Well, we answer, "No" clearly enough. What is to be done? What can be best done? Here is the wisdom of these conferences. To-night we take up industrial work, next week, pleasure, for they must have some pleasure, and the following week spiritual work.

Mr. A. Jepson said the work of Youths' Institutes is both spiritual and secular. We want to win these lads to Christ, and we want to raise them in society. The teachers should take an interest

even in the games of the lads. One point that must be remembered is, that the lads are ignorant of the simplest truths of the Bible. He had found that the lads who had been hard at work all day do not care much for classes or study, they want amusing; but the wise teacher will seek to make even their amusements instructive.

Mr. R. PRICE said that boys and girls of fourteen began to fancy themselves too old for school, and it is for such that the Institutes come in. Let two rooms be secured, well lit, and open every night. Let a godly and sensible superintendent be found who will be there every night, one in sympathy with the lads, and who will occasionally play a game with them. If possible, have a gymnasium, which is very necessary though expensive. Have a reading-room, and harmless refreshment if possible. Organise a singing class and a Bible class, with occasional evangelistic service. But by all means let every school try something, however limited the accommodation at first.

Mr. GEORGE HOLLAND described the Industrial work carried on at his schools, and exhibited many specimens of carving, turning, fretwork, carpentry, and printing. The *Sewing* and *Reading Classes* for the elder girls had also been very successful.

Addresses followed by Messrs. R. J. Curtis, Scarffe, Bryant, Fisher, Henry Hill, jun., and others.

Succinctly put, the experience of these workers was that Week-night Classes are absolutely necessary. Industrial work meets the wants of many, but even they want a change; carving, fretwork, printing, &c., will be tried successively.

IN MR. SPURGEON'S TABERNACLE.

On Monday evening, the 16th October, many Ragged School teachers assembled in the Metropolitan Tabernacle to listen to a special address by Mr. Spurgeon on Ragged Schools.

Mr. SPURGEON remarked that the chief subject of prayer that evening would be the Sabbath and Ragged School work throughout London and the world. They went well together—the one supplemented the other, and together they made up a world of blessing for this great city of ours.

Mr. J. KIRK read the following letter from the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury:—

"I am much grieved that I am unable to be present. I am grieved because there is no man in the country whose opinion and support in such matters I prize more highly than those of my friend Mr. Spurgeon. It would give me singular pleasure, after nearly forty years of work in the Ragged School cause, to hear the testimony and counsel of so valuable a man. Few men have preached so much and

so well, and few men have combined so practically their words and their actions. I deeply admire and love him, because I do not believe that there lives anywhere a more sincere and simple servant of our Blessed Lord. Great talents have been rightly used, and, under God's grace, have led to great issues."

Mr. KIRK, in a brief address, showed that the need for Ragged School work is still pressing and imperative.

After a season of praise and prayer, Mr. C. H. SPURGEON pleaded the cause of Ragged Schools, referred to the importance of Sunday Schools in training the young, and proceeded to say that these institutions were more likely to be spoilt by praise than checked by censure just now. He did not stand up to be an advocate for either praise or censure, but he wished to say a word or two about them which might be helpful at this juncture. There was a very current idea that Ragged Schools had ceased to exist—that Ragged School teachers might now put on their nightcaps, go to bed, and sleep the sleep of the righteous, for their work was done. And many respectable people were under the supposition that there were no Ragged School children left—that Board Schools washed and purified them, blacked their boots, and kept them in music and everything else. They were under the impression, in fact, that Board Schools were a kind of father to poor children. That was a great mistake, as little Tom and Jim well knew. The Board Schools might, perhaps, be a father-in-law to them, but they were not a father, and never would be. With all the excellencies of Board Schools—and they were many, and might God bless them in attempting to give a good education to the people—yet it was a fact that they did not reach a portion of the children that required to be educated. He did not like to think of it, but it was true that there were some persons in London, and they were to be counted by thousands, who never would attend a place of worship, for the reason that if they did those who now attended church would have to go out. It was literally a fact that working people could not and would not sit next to them. If they did they would know it when they got home. Ah, they smiled! They might be the greatest of philanthropists, but they would find themselves edging just a little way off—he was sure they would, for they admired cleanliness. Ministers who went about the East End had told him stories that made him shudder from head to foot concerning the awful state of filthiness and the diseased condition of many with whom they came in contact. These people, in fact, made themselves to be a sort of lepers in our midst, and could not, therefore, go into a congregation. Not but that they were willing to say at once, "Oh, yes, we welcome

them; let them come in." He (Mr. Spurgeon) was glad to say that, and he meant it when he said it, and so did they. But he would say no more on that head; they wouldn't come to church, and they didn't come. There was a certain class of children who were very much in the same condition in reference to Board Schools. They should go to a Board School, but they had no shoes to go in. What was worse, some of them had no trousers. Yes, that was a fact. Hundreds of children were so ill-clad that they could not appear outside the door. And not children only, but men and women too, who had to starve inside because they were not fit to be seen in the public streets. And the little urchins that did go out—did not they know some of them? Their boy went to a Board School. Would they like him to come home walking with one of those urchins? The parents were not proud—they were only decent. Just so. What was to become of that very ragged one, and the others that rose up from the lowest depth? There must be a Ragged School for them—there was no use mincing matters—and into that school they must go. It would be almost impossible to get anybody to teach in those schools who was paid for it; but love could do what money could not. He (Mr. Spurgeon) had a bill some time ago in respect of a certain transaction done for him by a good man in the City of London. The gentleman in question put a penny stamp on it, sent it back, and wrote "settled by love" on it. Now, that was a capital plan, and he merely told the story in order to show that there were some things which love could do but money could not. There was a proverb about not being able to secure a thing "for love nor money." There was love in the hearts of men and women which for years had led them to go to the raggeddom of London and seek to find precious consolation in improving the condition of the juvenile population. God bless them with a sevenfold blessing for their self-denying services; but he should not like people outside to think there was no need for teachers. He believed there was just as much need as ever there had been for them, and he sometimes thought the need was greater, because the necessity was apparently less; for when people thought there was no necessity they slackened their exertions. He hoped none of them would slacken their efforts to support this movement. The Ragged School was as much needed as ever it was, and he was afraid that until the millennium it would always be. There would always be poverty in the land. As things were, socially and politically, we were quite certain to have poor people in the land as long as men were in it. Besides that, there was so much unthriftiness, extravagance, depravity of all sorts—and chiefly drunkenness—that there were always uncared-for children who ought to be cared for

by their own parents, but who could not be because their parents were unfit to be parents, and knew not the sanctity of that relationship. Alas! there would be also sin in the world, even if drunkenness could be done away with, for we were not better in our birth than we used to be. Our children were born in sin, just the same as our grandfathers were. It was curious how the world was coming round to a belief in that. Years ago it was held that the doctrine of human depravity was a slander upon human nature, and it was said when a child was born that its heart was as white as a piece of paper. He (Mr. Spurgeon) had lived to see it taught by philosophers that we not only had about us all the sins, whims, and fancies of all the men we were descended from, but those of gorillas, dogs, horses, tigers, elephants, and oysters, right up to that primeval "What's his name?" from which we came. So that we had a depravity of a wonderful kind—the depravity of ages. He did not wonder that instead of being improved out of the world, human nature remained the same, with the new twists and conformations in it, as ages passed along. Never would the world be in such a condition as not to require the gospel—until the ransomed Church of God be saved to sin no more. Let them not, therefore, flatter themselves into idleness, but still keep on their service to God in looking after the little ones, and especially the ragged little ones. There were some people who seemed to look at everything through blue spectacles. They had the "blues" occasionally and saw only the dark points of the landscape. It seemed to them that after all that had been done little was in reality gained, and the world was as bad as ever. He was sometimes asked by people whether he thought the world had been in the least improved. He heard an old man say that it was useless for persons to think there had not been any improvement in the morals of the people, for he had lived long enough to see such a marked difference that he could only hold up his hands in astonishment and delight. And it was so. It was not so long ago that cock-fighting, bear-baiting, and all sorts of cruel sports were indulged in, not only by the lowest of the low, but by what were called the highest ranks of society. Then, again, the ladies to this day withdrew after dinner. Why did they withdraw? He (Mr. Spurgeon) could never see any reason for it until he was told that it was to give the gentlemen a fair opportunity to get drunk, and also to let them talk loosely, which they would not dare to do in the presence of ladies. And as to the ladies themselves, when they went upstairs—well, the least said the better. There was a story told of Sir Walter Scott to the effect that an aunt of his requested him to purchase for her a certain book which, when a girl, she had heard read with great

delight in the drawing-room by the ladies after dinner. Sir Walter, knowing that it was about as foul a book as ever was written, conveniently forgot all about the request. His aunt, however, reminded him of it, and he got the book and sent it to her. Shortly afterwards he received the book back, with many apologies from his aunt. Only think of that! Such things were not done now, and could not be done. One of the things that pleased him about London—and there were many that tended to depress him—was that there was evidently a something to be worked upon for any good object or cause. Whatever he might think of certain religious movements, it was quite certain that the people were affected by them. It was beyond doubt that there was the material about that would take fire when the fire was lit. Let them look at the Gospel Temperance movement. It was thought to be an almost hopeless movement because nothing could be done with the people. But what was the case? For ten days they thronged the Tabernacle, and sometimes there were twice as many people outside as ever were able to come in. And the bulk of them were the very class it was intended to reach. He felt very thankful they were not his people, because they were a deal rougher than the Tabernacle congregations. He could not help thinking, when he saw their faces, "Thank God, they don't belong to me." But he wanted to see a change produced in them, and he felt glad that the very sort of people who wanted the change were fortunately there. With all their roughness, they were enthusiastic in their determination to give up the drink, and try and rise above its influence. That showed there must be something at work among the people that they should be found in that condition. There were, of course, gentlemen who, in consequence of the temperance movement, found their trade falling off. He thought great credit was due to them for the way they took it, for it was inevitably coming. They talked about London as being a very wicked city, and they certainly could not exaggerate it, for it was wicked enough; yet there was an order and peacefulness about it that, to his mind, seemed miraculous. There was only a handful of police—not half enough to his thinking—but still it somehow happened that they kept the vast population in order. No other city was like London in that respect. There was something in the hearts of the people that kept them from the excesses into which, for instance, the people of Paris had so often fallen. It was not that they were better off, but that there was an influence of a religious kind which, though they scarcely knew it to be so, yet operated upon the people; and many a man that scarce knew the name of Jesus of Nazareth yet felt His influence, and he was not what he would have been had he not dwelt beneath the

shadow of the Cross. He (Mr. Spurgeon) grieved over all that was evil, but he thought of much that was good. He remembered a truly great man saying to him that he was dreadfully afraid of the people, and he added that one day the streets of London would run with blood. He (Mr. Spurgeon) said to him, "You are a nobleman, and fear God. Have you ever been insulted by a costermonger about your religion?" "Never," was the reply. "But you have had hard things from persons of your own rank?" "Yes," he said. "Then," he (Mr. Spurgeon) replied, "never you be afraid of the democracy." He always thought of the scum when he thought of the top of the pot, though no doubt there was a very nasty sediment at the bottom. He was not there to speak for one class or against another. To him they were all alike. It mattered not to him whether they wore a coronet or a cap; but he must say he could never drop into the notion that we were to be so much afraid of this or that. Let the power of true religion permeate all society, and they would see not worse but better days in the time to come. With reference to the necessity for intelligence in the teacher, Mr. Spurgeon remarked that there were some Sunday Schools belonging to some denominations where the children were kept quiet, and so far these establishments were a blessing. But there must be real teaching and real instruction, and surely if everything was taught that ought to be taught, there would be less belief, for example, in gipsies telling fortunes. "Oh, but," it might be said, "that never came into the Sunday School lesson." Then just a little whisper in the ear of those who arranged the National Sunday school lessons. Put it in, for it was necessary. There were some people who really believed that an old woman with black eyes could see into the future more than they could with their own dear bright eyes. Why, those black eyes could not see farther than the bright eyes, and that was as far as your nose. The superstitions about elder-flowers blooming a second time, about not sitting at table with a company of thirteen, and other matters, were believed in by people who should not be allowed out of a lunatic asylum. He supposed, however, that if they were incarcerated, the rates would run up immensely. Some men said they never went to church between the age of eighteen and thirty, because they had had a bellyful of it when they were boys; but by giving children new and happier surroundings and more prayerful teaching, he hoped to see spring up a better race, free from the taint of drink—a race prepared of God to receive Christ Jesus their Lord, and to rejoice in Him.

RECREATION: WHAT SHOULD IT BE?

The third conference of the series was held in Morton Road Ragged Schools. After tea Mr. H. R. WILLIAMS took the chair, and in opening said:—

Our subject to-night is Recreation, and it is an important subject, which ought to have more attention than it has yet received if we are to influence and benefit at every point the neglected children of our London streets.

Mr. J. J. COUSENS, of Latymer Road Schools, read the opening paper, in which he remarked that he himself was not only an old Ragged School teacher, but an old scholar; and he owed all his education to the Ragged School at Gray's Yard.

With regard to amusements, he said that chess, draughts, dominoes, bagatelle, etc., were nightly in use by hundreds of lads in Latymer Road Schools. Cocoa concerts, fortnightly, have also been highly appreciated, while the fact of ladies waiting on the rough boys has a humanising tendency. He trusted, however, that recreation was not to be considered as merely play; hence he went on to suggest that home improvement should be inculcated. Teach them to make home bright and clean, to whitewash, paint, and repair; so would they find useful recreation, real pleasure, and eventual comfort in home life. Flower cultivation, so far as possible, should be encouraged. Part singing is also interesting, pleasant, and enjoyable.

Mr. SCARFFE read a paper, in which he said: Of late years all sports and games intended for the bracing up of the mental and physical faculties have received more attention than they did formerly. There is no doubt that a boy's character is formed as much in the playground as in the school-room or workshop, perhaps even more so; for in amusements his individuality comes out more strongly. In devising a scheme for securing proper recreation, the subject naturally resolves itself into two parts—one relating to outdoor, and the other to indoor games. Where schools have the advantage of a playground or the public park being near for cricket and football, great scope is allowable. As to cricket, no game can be compared to it. The means it affords by its healthy and not too violent exercise for physical development, give it the strongest claims upon those with whom rests the responsibility of providing suitable amusements for boys. A good gymnasium is very desirable, as it is always very popular with boys. Drill is a most useful and beneficial form of recreation, and at the same time teaches prompt obedience. The bath is, apart from its value as a healthy exercise, useful in teaching to swim, and may thus be the means of saving life, which gives it peculiar claims.

Turning now to pastimes suited for indoor life, and especially for the long winter evenings, we find at our disposal a large number of suitable games: chess, draughts, families, snap, lotto, puzzles, five-stones, drawing slates, bagatelle, races, spinning-tops, skipping-ropes, kaleidoscopes, picture books, and many others; a good library, and the many monthly periodicals and journals, which bring about the best results. A plan we have which is looked forward to as a great treat—viz., a few of the best behaved boys each week are taken to the different museums. A monthly sing-song, presided over by the teacher, not only brings one evening's amusement, but tends to employ the boys' or girls' time in learning pieces to read or recite.

Messrs. H. R. Williams, R. Stone, R. J. Curtis, Aulay Macaulay, and J. Kirk, took part in the discussion.

Among the things recommended were Girls' Needlework Classes, Industrial Exhibitions, Drawing Classes, and interesting Lectures. As an example of the way in which these may be made both interesting and instructive, it may be stated that a civil engineer, with diagrams and models, and a silversmith on jewels and precious stones, talked familiarly on matters with which they were daily conversant. Elder boys and girls have been taken to picture galleries, and drum and fife bands have been found of great advantage.

The last conference was on

SPIRITUAL RESULTS,

the grand aim of our work being the conversion of souls. The question was asked and answered, What are the best means of promoting it amongst young and old, and securing permanent results?

EVENING WORK.

THE following circular has been widely issued:—

"Ragged School Union, Exeter Hall, Strand,
"September 1st, 1883.

"DEAR SIR,—The time for the winter session is fast approaching. It is hoped that evening work, comprising Night Schools, Youths' Institutes, and other work of a spiritual and social character, will be commenced or resumed. *I shall feel obliged by a line saying what is proposed to be undertaken.* I shall also be glad to confer with any friends on any matters affecting the school work.

"I remain, dear Sir, yours truly,
"RICHARD J. CURTIS, Organising Secretary."

SCHOLARS' PRIZES, CHRISTMAS, 1883.

THE Committee of the Ragged School Union, being desirous to encourage good conduct and long-continued service in all who have passed through the Schools of the Union, have again decided on giving Prizes to young persons who have kept their situations with good character for twelve months or upwards, and coming within the following conditions, viz.:—

1. They must be over twelve and under eighteen years of age.

2. They must have attended the Ragged School or Mission giving the recommendation at least six months *previously* to having entered the first situation held by them.

3. Having kept any one situation for twelve months, ending in 1882, they are allowed to make one change, but must not be out of place for more than two weeks; in this case they are eligible for the Prize, provided they are in the second place on December 31st, 1882. Certificates of character will be required from both of these situations.

4. If they have not before received a Prize, they will now be entitled to seven shillings and sixpence, as well as a Card, provided the committee of the school recommending pay two shillings and sixpence of it.

5. Those who have received a money prize previously, and are again recommended, will be entitled to an Illuminated Certificate, and a Prize Book.

6. They must have been in regular attendance at the Ragged or other Sunday School for the *current* year. This rule does not apply to domestic servants.

7. Shoeblacks, occasional labourers, scholars partially employed, or those engaged by their relatives, will not be eligible for the Prizes.

8. Certificates must be furnished by the employers and school authorities, to show that these conditions have been complied with, and that good conduct has been continued to December 31st, 1883.

9. The candidate will lose the benefit of the Prize if the application be not fully and accurately filled up, duly signed, and returned to the Office, Exeter Hall, on or before January 28, 1884.

The Prizes may be given in books, clothes, or otherwise, as the committee of the school may determine.

Exeter Hall, December, 1883. JOHN KIRK, *Secretary*.

FLOWER SERVICES.

These were held by Sermon Lane, Chequer Alley, and King Edward Street Schools, Mile End. The rooms were most tastefully decorated. The labour involved in the preparation of these scenes of beauty is immense. At the King Edward Schools, Mr. Montague and his friends gave days and nights to the work. The room itself was a bower of beauty, but the greatest pains were bestowed on the platform. The finest flowers were arranged, tier upon tier, in such profusion that it resembled a lovely bank of Flora's own designing, the pulpit being formed by an arch covered with verdure, and interspersed with fruits; and the effect in the evening, when the gas was lighted, was perfectly enchanting. We must not forget to mention a beautiful basket of roses, sent by her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales from Marlborough House, with a kind, sympathetic letter to Mr. Montague.

Three services were held—viz., for parents, children, and young people over fourteen years of age. They were conducted by the Rev. R. T. Thomas and Messrs. Curtis and Sharpless. The evening service was aided by Messrs. H. R. Williams, J. G. Gent, R. J. Curtis, of the Ragged School Union, and Dr. Flack.

The following is the list of some of the contributors who so generously assisted in conferring this boon upon their less-favoured fellow-creatures:—H.R.H. the Princess of Wales, H.R.H. the Duchess of Connaught, H.R.H. Princess Mary, Duchess of Teck; the Duchess of Wellington, the Duchess of Sutherland, the Duchess of Manchester, the Duchess of Leeds, the Duchess of Richmond, the Duchess of Beaufort, the Marchioness of Waterford, the Marchioness of Ely, the Marchioness of Headfort, the Marchioness of Ailesbury, the Marchioness of Ailsea, the Countess of Aberdeen, the Countess of Clarendon, the Countess of Egmont, the Countess of Dudley, the Countess of Zetland, the Countess of Gosford, the Countess of Darnley, the Countess of Wharncliffe, the Countess of Clifden, the Countess of Malmesbury, the Countess of Sandwich, the Countess of Suffolk, the Countess of Harwood, the Countess of Aveland, the Countess of Gainsborough, the Countess of Huntley, the Countess Stanhope, the Countess Sudeley, the Countess Poltimore, Viscountess Barrington, Lady Cairns, Lady Henniker, Lady Hood, Lady Broke Middleton, Lady Lilford, Lady Boyne, and Lady Burdett.

Eleven hundred bunches of flowers were distributed amongst the children and in the homes of the neighbouring poor.

FLOWER SERMON.

CHEQUER ALLEY, JUNE 10, 1883.

"The trees of the Lord are full of sap: the cedars of Lebanon which He hath planted."—Psalm civ. 16.

"The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon."—Psalm xcii. 12.

ONCE again in the good Providence of God we have come round to the celebration of our flower service. Since our last service of a similar kind what changes have come and gone! The tired old earth has gone to sleep during another winter; death has reigned in the field and in the garden; the leaves, which were full of freshness and beauty, have withered away, and left the branches on which they grew bare and comfortless, like a childless mother. But Spring also has come, and "unswathed her infants," in the shape of germs and buds. The flowers have appeared again on the earth, and the time of the singing of birds has come. The trees are covered again with leaves and blossom, and the fields are becoming "white unto harvest." It therefore is a time of banquet and of song. Let us banish care and anxiety, and abandon ourselves to visions of beauty and thoughts of Him who "renews the face of the earth."

1. Let me justify my selection of texts. I think I hear some one say, "A tree isn't a flower, and a sermon on trees is not suitable for a flower service." Now although this seems plausible, I don't agree with it. A tree is really only a large flower, and indeed some of our sweetest flowers are grown on trees; such, for instance, as the rose, the rhododendron, the lilac, and many others. We shall consider, therefore, that for our purpose to night trees and flowers are the same. Having cleared away this difficulty, let me ask you to look into the texts themselves, and find what subjects they lead us to.

They are as follows, viz.:—

1. The trees of the Lord—cedars.
2. The palm-trees.
3. The home of the cedars—Lebanon, a mountain range.
4. The resemblances between these trees and a righteous man.

1. Now we will take first, the home of the cedars—Lebanon. Do you ever think of mountain ranges? If you come from Wales or Scotland you do. If you were born in London, and were never beyond the sound of Bow Bells, then you never think of them. Let me try to tell you what a mountain range is. It is the place where water is manufactured. Perhaps you will say, Water manufactured! Why, it is already in existence, in the sea, in rivers, in lakes, in ponds. Yes, but where

does it come from? The sea was made at the Creation. But the sea is salt, and you cannot therefore drink it. But rivers and rills, and lakes and ponds, where do they come from? They come from mountain ranges—from such places as the home of the cedar. The earth is not flat. Its surface is uneven, and it is to that unevenness that we owe largely the fertility of the earth. There are mountains and valleys, and this varying altitude determines the climate, and the climate determines fruitfulness. Now there is one thing here I must point out to you, which is not what you might have expected, and it is this: the higher you go up the mountain, and the nearer you get to the sun, which you know is the source of heat, the colder the weather becomes; and when you reach a certain height you come to what is called the region of perpetuals now, or everlasting winter. Well, these wintry regions are the places where water is manufactured and stored for use. These are where rivers are born as infants, and taking their rise in this lofty desolation, they trickle down the mountain side, gathering volume as they go, until they reach the plain and become fertile rivers; and not only fertile, but they constitute a highway for traffic, and bear ships and steamers on their bosom. But the mountain solitude, in the lofty heights, is what we have to do with just now, that is where the cedar grows. The average height of the range is 7,000 feet, but its highest points, Dahree Kholib and Jebel Sunnin, reach respectively 10,050 and 8,555 feet above the level of the sea.

In this lofty region are the sources of the Jordan, and another important river, the Orontes. For more than six months in the year the highest parts are covered with snow, which is perpetually melting and finding its way into the plain.

So much for the home of the cedar. I must say a word about the home of the palm-tree, although nothing is mentioned in the texts about its locality. It is in fact a much more widely spread tree than the cedar, and indeed is to be found all over tropical countries. It is, however peculiarly the tree of the desert, of such countries as Egypt, and Arabia, and Persia, where the date which grows on it, and corn, are the staple food of the tillers of the soil. In Upper Egypt these trees are said to bear annually from 300 to 500 pounds of dates. Now the palm-tree is also full of sap. Although growing in the sand, on a hot, level waste, the very opposite of the Cedar of Lebanon, it is still full of sap, and foliage, and fruit. Just think how grateful it must be to the weary traveller in the desert to come on a grove of these delightful trees. They always prove that water is near. *The palm cannot live without water.* When the English army was in Egypt the general told the soldiers that whenever they saw the palm-tree they would find water if

they dug for it, and they did so. So much for the homes of the two trees. The one high up on the mountains, the child of storm, and snow, and desolation, and mountain torrent; the other born in the desert amid burning sands.

2. Now having looked at the homes in which these trees are born and grow, let us look at the trees themselves.

(*a*) "The trees of the Lord are full of sap: the cedars of Lebanon which He hath planted." The characteristics of the cedar are sturdy strength, majesty, freshness, and beauty. With water at its roots, and water constantly trickling past it or falling on it in the shape of rain or snow, it is always fresh and good-looking. Constantly rocked by storm and tempest, it becomes riveted to the soil, and is the very picture of sturdy strength, of defiant hardihood, of God-sustained energy and independence. Can you wonder that they called these trees Royal Trees, "Trees of the Lord," which "He planted" on that lofty watch-tower as stewards, seeming to say to them, "Occupy till I come; teach men to root themselves in God, to be strong in His strength, clothed with His beauty, upright, sturdy, strong, independent; not destroyed by storm or trouble, but only established and more firmly rooted by such things"? The righteous shall *grow* as the cedar in Lebanon. A curious pulpit for such a silent preacher!

(*b*) Leaving the cedar, let us look at the palm-tree, the offspring of the desert. This tree is also full of "sap," and fruit and shade, and altogether one of the loveliest objects the eye can rest on. But where does it get its sap? It also gets its meat from God. Nothing can be more different than the homes of these two trees. In the case of the cedar, the moisture abounds; in the case of the palm there is hardly any, and that little is invisible and impalpable. Both are born in desolate regions, the one the desolation of cold, the other the desolation of heat. The one where water is manufactured, the other where water cannot be found, where all other kinds of nature than the palm-tree languish and die for want of it. And yet the palm-tree is "full of sap." Dig and you will find a well at its root. Its source of vitality is hidden; but it is there at its roots, or the tree in all its glory and beauty could not be. Where does the water come from? I cannot tell. In Egypt it hardly ever rains; the country is supplied with water from the Nile, which rises in the far south, and usually overflows its banks. Somehow or other the water finds its way to the roots of the palm. All things do God's bidding. Everything animate or inanimate seeks its meat from God, and none are disappointed. Winter and summer and cold and heat and storm and calm are all "Ministers of His, that do His commandments, hearkening to the voice of His

word." And so the trees of the Lord are "full of sap;" the cedars that are in Lebanon and the palm of the desert, which "He hath planted," are fed with food convenient for them, nourished by God, as a nurse cherishes her children. Lo! these are parts of His ways. They do not differ from other parts, for all God's ways are perfect, except that the palm and the cedar are magnificent to our mortal comprehension.

3. Now, having considered the homes of the cedar and the palm respectively, let us conclude by considering the points in which the *righteous* are said to resemble these trees. The righteous shall *flourish* like the *palm-tree*, and *grow* as the *cedar* that is in Lebanon.

The Righteous. There are two kinds of people in the world, the good and the bad, the righteous and the wicked. Every man and every woman belongs to one class or the other, and every man and every woman knows to which he or she belongs. You know you do. Conscience, hidden in the heart of each of us by God, like the well at the root of the palm, tells us which class we belong to. But only the righteous are spoken of in our text. The righteous man or woman has to do two things—viz., to *flourish* like the *palm-tree* and to *grow* like the *cedar*. This implies first that—

(*a*) *They should be beautiful.* They should bear looking at. No one ever tires of looking at a palm-tree, and if we be Christ-like men and women no one will tire of looking at us. If we are unselfish, and gentle, and honest, and true, our lives will be beautiful as the palm-tree, as graceful and stately and fruitful. In this desert world men will sit under our shadow, and taste our fruit, and thank God for the good we do them.

(*b*) *They should be unpretending.* The palm-tree thrives from a hidden source—that is, from a well at its root. Apparently there is no water for a hundred miles, and the air is hot and dry and feverish. Yet here is the palm-tree flourishing—a sappy, succulent, fruitful tree. How welcome to the pilgrim! How often the saving of his life! So our life should be unpretentious, known chiefly by action, not by profession, by deeds not words. The fruit only should be visible, not the root—that should be hid with Christ in God.

(*c*) *They should be sturdy.* You need this quality in this world. You have many a storm to meet. Be like the cedar which grows slowly and puts on its strength gradually. Unlike the gourd which came up in a night and perished in a night, it is the growth of centuries, adding but a little annually to its sturdy strength, to its girth of stem, and its deep shadowy foliage. Slow, sure, patient growth. "He that believeth shall not make haste."

Such let your life be here, my friends, conspicuous for beauty and

simplicity and sturdiness, and you shall one day shine in the kingdom of God that is to be revealed. There are better times coming in a far better world than this, in which Self shall be crucified, and brotherhood and sisterhood shall be glorified: a kingdom of the Truth, out of which everything that offends shall be cast, and in which shall prevail only the things which are lovely and of "good report:" a kingdom of sunshine which shall not dazzle, of shade without gloom: a kingdom of rest and beauty, of green pastures and still waters. R. R. G.

A FLOWER SHOW IN BETHNAL GREEN.

On the 11th, 12th, and 13th of July a most interesting and successful Flower Show and Industrial Exhibition were held in the Nichol Street schoolroom.

On the 15th May no less than 322 plants—geraniums, fuchsias, musks, creeping jennies, &c., were given out to the scholars on payment of one penny for each plant, and on the 10th of July 235 were brought back for exhibition.

After very careful consideration the judges awarded to ten plants first-class, to sixteen second-class, and to twenty third-class prizes, the exhibitors being twenty-eight girls and eighteen boys. The plants showed that great care and attention had been paid to their training, and with better results than last year. Prizes were also awarded for designs in cress, of which nineteen were exhibited. They attracted much attention and formed a pleasing feature.

In the Industrial Exhibition there were 140 exhibits, articles of their own manufacture being brought by 115 girls and 25 boys attending the schools.

A boy of sixteen exhibited four horn cups, a boy of ten a fretwork card rack, a boy of eleven three cut-glass knife-rests (2nd prize) and a scent-bottle. A miniature dining table made by a boy twelve years old obtained a first prize, a doll's wardrobe by a boy of fifteen a third prize, a mahogany armchair by a boy of fifteen a first prize, another with a footstool by a boy of eighteen a first prize. The exhibition of needlework reflected great credit on both teachers and scholars, and consisted of a large quantity of underclothing, in many instances cut out as well as made by the children themselves; some pretty little washing dresses, a baby's coloured pelisse very neatly and cleanly made, several pinafores, aprons, antimacassars, mats, little wool hoods, wool wraps, knitted stockings, knitted socks, dolls' dresses, and a doll's bassinette, the quilt and finishing of which had been a labour divided amongst several girls; two large patchwork quilts, the united work of

sewing classes; and two silk patchwork cushions, made by two girls only; several mottoes and texts worked in wool and silk upon perforated cardboard, and a large one of "The Lord's Prayer." Fourteen first, eleven second, and twelve third, making a total of thirty-seven prizes, were awarded to the exhibits, and were taken by twenty-seven girls and ten boys.

On Friday evening, July 13th, the prizes were distributed by the Right Honourable the Earl of Shaftesbury. With him on the platform were the Rev. Dr. Allon; Mr. Jonathan Duthoit; Mr. Henry Spicer; Mr. H. R. Williams, a member of the Committee of the Ragged School Union; Mr. Woodland Erlebach, and Mr. J. T. Henderson.

Mr. Henderson read a short report, and explained that, in addition to the Flower Show prizes, those for regular attendance and good conduct at the Week Night Schools during the past winter were to be distributed also. The Earl of Shaftesbury then distributed the exhibition prizes, which were pictures neatly framed, after which his lordship gave away the school prizes, consisting of books, pictures, workboxes, clocks, &c. These prizes are worthy of notice, for some very interesting facts were revealed. The possible number of attendances during the winter was 120, and eleven scholars who took prizes had been present every time the school was open, four 119 times, twelve 118 times, four 117 times, four 116 times, four 114 times, and three 113 times. No prize was given for less than 105 attendances. *One girl*, who received a timepiece, and to whom his lordship was pleased to speak a word of approval, *had not missed school once for four years in succession;* another received for the fourth time a prize for the highest possible number of attendances.

Mr. H. R. Williams proposed a vote of thanks to the chairman, which was seconded by the Rev. Dr. Allon and carried unanimously.

Mr. Henderson presented the Earl with a coronet of cress grown by one of the superintendents, which had occupied a conspicuous position in the show and on the platform.

STEPHEN THE YEOMAN RAGGED SCHOOL.

A show of flowers grown by the children attending this school was held in the Lecture Hall, Salisbury Street, Bermondsey, on Thursday evening, July 26. The circumstances of the exhibitors considered, the display was an exceedingly good one, and well deserved the encomiums bestowed on it by the numerous company

present. The chair was occupied by the honorary treasurer of the school, the Hon. H. A. Lawrence, who in opening the proceedings briefly related the history of the exhibition, and gave some interesting details as to the difficulties the flowers had had to encounter. As we gave our readers last quarter a description of this school and the neighbourhood in which it stands, some of these difficulties may easily be imagined. Mr. Lawrence's further remarks bore on the excellent influence the nurture of flowers exerts on the character of such children as are in attendance at Stephen the Yeoman Schools. In the course of the evening brief speeches were delivered by the Rev. John Farren, Mr. R. J. Curtis, of the Ragged School Union, and Mr. John Menzies, the superintendent of the school. The scholars, a large body of whom were present, under the guidance of Miss Challis gave a selection of hymns and songs, and several friends added to the attractions of the evening by singing solos. The prizes, a considerable number of which had been provided, were given away by the Hon. Mrs. Lawrence, this part of the proceedings being naturally one of the most popular. It ought to have been mentioned above that at an early period of the evening a little mite of a girl in the name of her fellow-scholars presented Mrs. Lawrence with a beautiful bouquet. In all there were over two hundred exhibitors, and their plants—most numerous among which were geraniums, fuchsias, musks, and creeping jennies—were in many cases very excellent specimens. Mr. Gough, florist, Old Kent Road, who acted as judge, had also lent a large number of very fine plants, which were greatly admired. The meeting, which was throughout a great success, terminated with votes of thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence, and to the ministers and deacons of Jamaica Row Chapel, for so kindly granting the use of their hall. It is, we believe, intended that henceforth the flower show will be one of the annuals of Stephen the Yeoman Mission.

THE MARY BARING REST.

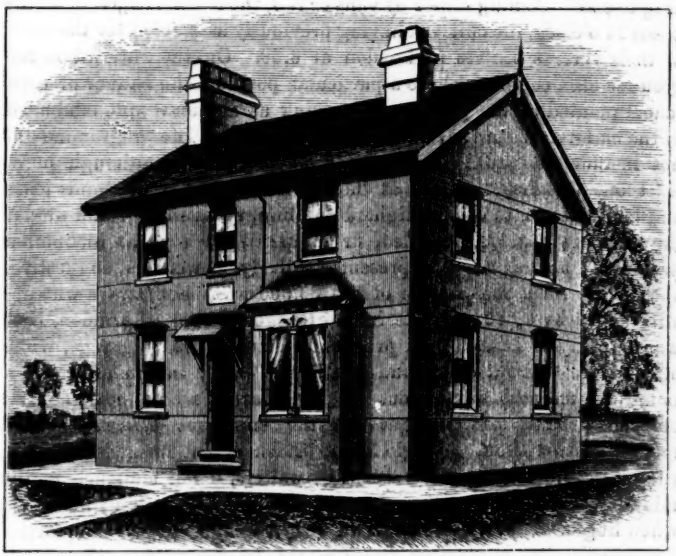
A PROVISION has been made by the erection of a cottage at Shirley, Woodside, near Croydon, for the reception of children for a fortnight's outing, in a beautiful country, away from the depressing influences of fœtid courts and overcrowded and ill-ventilated rooms. Twelve children are accommodated at a time; the term of rest and recreation is a fortnight. The sexes are divided; twelve boys go at one time, and twelve girls succeed them. The children are under the care of a matron.

This Rest is especially provided for the George Yard Ragged School

and Mission, and one may feel assured that all the wants of the children will be carefully attended to. The cottage, as depicted below, which stands on a part of Addiscombe Park, has been erected by Lady Ashburton, and named after her daughter. An acre and a half of ground surrounding the cottage will be cultivated for use and beauty.

Another house is in course of erection, which will minister to the rest and refreshment of some of the adults connected with the same Mission.

The children will gain force and fire and freshness, and roses will



replace the pallor of their cheeks; and of the adults, the weak and dispirited, the broken in health and the bankrupt in pocket, will get a lift on life's road. The sympathy shown, and the practical help afforded in the shape of a free holiday, will do something to knit again the bones broken by misfortune, and reconsolidate those who, by the terrors of life, have been poured out like water.

The Rest was opened on June 13th, when 400 of George Holland's poor friends were invited to give *éclat* to the occasion. Their railway fare was paid, and a plentiful supply of good things were provided. The building was dedicated to Almighty God by a short service.

RAGGED SCHOOLS AT HAMPTON COURT.

On Saturday, June 30, the great general outing of the Ragged Schools of London, under the auspices of the Ragged School Union, took place, when between two and three thousand children, and nearly three hundred teachers, spent a very enjoyable day in Bushey Park. When the heavy thunderstorm was raging early on Friday morning, those who were responsible for the arrangements naturally felt some misgivings; but the day which followed was a pattern of summer loveliness, and neither rain nor accident marred the excursion from beginning to end. Coming either by vans or rail, the schools began to arrive about 11 o'clock, the children having previously assembled for the start at their various centres in London at 8.30. On their arrival on the grounds each company chose a particular position, the banner of each school planted on the greensward serving as a picturesque landmark to the children when they strayed into the park. The programme did not include the provision of dinner for the schools, although in at least one instance teachers, at their own cost, served out sandwiches and tarts at noon to their delighted and hungry classes. After dinner the scholars sported, rambled, or competed for toys as inclination prompted; and, as a whole, presented a lively, as well as a suggestive, spectacle. As a fair sample of the 30,000 waifs and strays who are still taught by 3,000 teachers in the Ragged Schools of London, they were worthy of attention, a proportion actually wearing rags, while others were without shoes and stockings. Early in the afternoon a bountiful tea was served out by Mr. Earee, whose commissariat on the ground proved equal to the enormous consumption of refreshments without a single hitch. Each school formed a ring on the grass, the teachers, who acted as waiters, being stationed in the middle with their supplies of tea and bread-and-butter; and then when huge boxes of sliced cake were seen coming from headquarters for distribution a ringing cheer would be given which resounded through the park. There was no stint, and it is to be feared that all—the infants especially—did not eat with discretion. At 7 o'clock another "stay," in the shape of a bun, was given to each child. Throughout the day Mr. J. Kirk, the secretary of the Ragged School Union, was indefatigable in superintending all arrangements, and his efforts were seconded by Mr. Curtis, the organising secretary. Luncheon and tea for teachers were served in the tent at one and five respectively, when Mr. Curtis, in the name of the Committee, heartily welcomed the friends, and remarked that the state of the weather was so important to them under such conditions, that a fine day was the cream of their enjoyment. He then intimated that he

should be glad if all the London schools and all the teachers could be collected in that delightful park at one time; but as that was impossible, he congratulated those present on coming, and wished them all happiness in their work. Mr. Montague, a member of the parent Committee, and one who has long been associated with Ragged School work in Spitalfields, spoke of their great indebtedness to Mr. Kirk for the efforts he had made to ensure a pleasant day. Mr. Bewes, another member of the Committee, seconded the motion for a vote of thanks, and said that by getting up jolly games, and so on, for the youngsters, they must make the outing more attractive for the children than when they attempted Epsom Downs and such like places. Mr. Kirk, in reply, said that he had done no more than his duty; success was not owing to himself, nor to the other officers, but to the fine day. In former years it had been the custom to give each child a penny toy; but on Saturday articles of a better description were supplied to about a fourth part of the children, who won them by racing, &c. The day was thus regarded by all concerned as a grand success. On the following Monday, July 2nd, some 800 children and teachers were entertained at the expense of the Ragged School Union in a field kindly lent for the occasion at East Barnet.

FIELD LANE RAGGED SCHOOLS.

On Wednesday evening, the 25th April, the anniversary festival of the Field Lane Ragged Schools, Servants' Training Home, Boys' and Girls' Industrial Homes, and the other good and valuable agencies affiliated to the Institution, was celebrated at the Westminster Palace Hotel. His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught presided, and was supported by the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G., General Elmhirst, Colonel Sir Howard Elphinstone, K.C.B., Sir Maurice Fitzgerald, Mr. Alderman and Sheriff De Keyser, Mr. Sheriff Savory, Alderman Sir J. W. Ellis, Bart., Alderman Sir R. W. Carden, M.P., Mr. W. A. Bevan (Treasurer), Mr. F. A. Bevan, Mr. T. C. Chadwick (Hon. Secretary), Mr. Peregrine Platt (Secretary), &c., &c. The Right Hon. the Lord Mayor had also promised to attend, but was unavoidably prevented at the last moment.

After dinner a number of the boys and girls attending the Institution were introduced into the room and marched round after singing some pieces very sweetly.

In proposing the loyal toast, his Royal Highness remarked that her Majesty, although not a patron of the Institution, took a great interest in it, and had four times subscribed to it.

Alderman Sir R. W. Carden, M.P., who regretted the absence of

the Lord Mayor, gave "The Health of the Prince and Princess of Wales and the other members of the Royal Family," observing that he had been connected with the schools for more years than he cared to remember, and he thought it no slight honour to propose such a toast.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, who replied, in proposing "Prosperity to the Field Lane Refuges and Ragged Schools," said they were first founded in 1841, in Field Lane—notorious as the place then was as the abode of pickpockets—and began by taking five children. The number speedily rose to 800, representing, as they did then, the criminal classes. Various excrescences, so to speak, were formed upon the schools, such as Mothers' Meetings, Children's Dinners, Penny Banks, &c., all with the view of benefiting the poorer class. He wished to dwell particularly upon this fact, because from this Institution there had been formed a perfect network of charitable operations. He desired to speak more especially upon one branch of this work—that of the Field Lane Ragged School. Connected with it was the Day Nursery. Most of them knew the immense boon this was to the poor mothers who had to assist in gaining their own livelihood as well as looking after their husbands. The great feature of the Institution was the parental system. Let them imagine what miserable places large numbers of the families lived in—not only one family, but two, three, and sometimes four—and he asked them whether the children could under such circumstances be properly looked after. What an immense boon, then, must these schools be. The managers did their work admirably. Of course there was a great deal now to be done, and most of them must wish that they could help such a good institution in the way it required. He appealed to them most earnestly on behalf of such an excellent charity, which had conferred vast benefit in bringing up girls for service, and he hoped that many of those they had seen that evening would soon obtain good and comfortable homes in which they might obtain their own livelihood. There were not many institutions whose operations were so numerous and so beneficent. There was a debt of £2,700 on the new buildings, which they had been compelled to erect, owing to improvements by the Metropolitan Board of Works. It would be interesting to them to know that they maintained in the Refuges and Servants' Home 160 persons, in the Industrial Homes 200. Six hundred children attended the Ragged Schools, 500 persons attended the Mothers' Meeting and Relief Society, 500 the Ragged Church, and Free Breakfasts were provided for 160 ragged children, making the total number maintained or benefited 2,120. During last year 484 persons obtained night refuge. In all 14,556 night

lodgings were given. Out of that number 216 persons were assisted to situations or otherwise cared for, 15 necessitous and deserving girls were in training, 31 had been placed in service or in other institutions. The annual expenditure necessary to do all this work was £7,000, but their only reliable income amounted to £4,000. Therefore it was necessary that they should raise £3,000 by voluntary contributions, and his Royal Highness appealed to them most earnestly to aid the Society with funds.

The Earl of Shaftesbury, whose name was coupled with the toast, and who was loudly cheered, in reply said that loud as his Royal Highness had spoken in praise of the Institution, he had not said a word too much. Every word he had uttered, every expression he had made use of, was well merited by the Institution and those conducting it.

The Secretary announced subscriptions to the amount of £1,388, including his Royal Highness's list of £917. The following contributions were then added to the Duke's list:—His Royal Highness, £25; Messrs. Barclay, Bevan, and Co., £100; Alderman Sir R. W. Carden, M.P., £21; Alderman Sir J. W. Ellis, £5 5s.; Alderman Sir R. Hanson, £10 10s.; the Grocers' Company, £100; the Armourers and Braziers' Company, £10 10s.; Mr. Alderman and Sheriff De Keyser, £5 5s.; Mr. Sheriff Savory, £5 5s.

"The Health of his Royal Highness" was proposed by the Earl of Shaftesbury, and the Duke of Connaught briefly responded. Alderman Sir J. W. Ellis gave "The Health of the President, Treasurer, and Stewards," and eulogised the work which the Society was doing. Mr. W. A. Bevan, the Treasurer, replied.

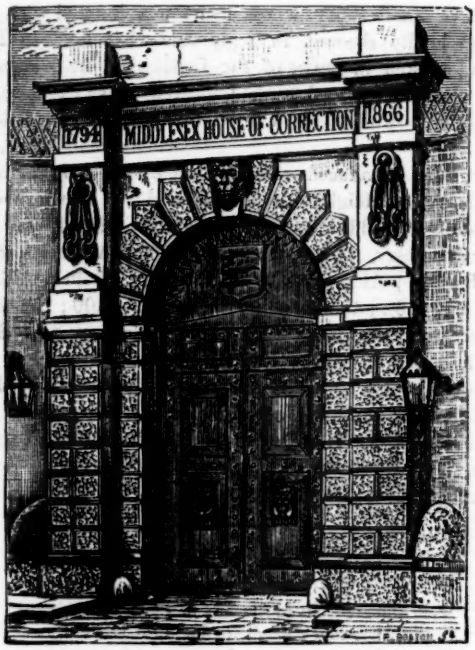
THE PRISON MISSION.

"What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood;
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow?
Try what repentance can"—

THE Ragged School epoch has been specially characterised by love—the love that revels in the regions of rags and ruin, and finds its brightest gems in the gutters of humanity. Operations planted amongst the poorest have ranged over the whole scale of degraded condition, and over the whole scale of man's allotted years; amongst children for whose wretchedness their parents are alone responsible, and amongst youths and adults who have leaped the barriers set up by God and man, and rushed recklessly to ruin.

Strongly imbued with a belief in the gracious message of mercy through Christ, Mr. George Hatton, aided by his friend Mr. Wheatley, has undertaken what many would regard as a forlorn hope, but their faith, working by love, has been most amply rewarded.

The pleasure in giving any details of so blessed a work is increased by another consideration, that while this is done other things are not left undone. The varied and extensive work of a religious and social



character among children, as well as all the ordinary operations among adults, show that prevention and reclamation are the mottoes on the banners with which they march to victory.

"The Prison Mission movement," the Report states, "was commenced in February, 1877, and has been widening and extending ever since. Every morning throughout the year (Sundays excepted) all discharged prisoners are met at the prison gates both at Coldbath Fields and Holloway, and offered a Free Breakfast in the mission premises close by. It is in contemplation to erect another iron room

on ground kindly granted by the Home Office authorities just outside Wandsworth Gaol. The importance of this extension will at once become apparent when we mention that some 10,000 prisoners are discharged from Wandsworth every year. Besides this, in Captain Colvill, the governor, we have a true friend and a devoted Christian, so that good results may be anticipated. When this branch of the work is in operation we shall have covered the entire ground of the metropolitan male local prisons.

"During the time we have taken our stand outside the gates of Coldbath Fields Prison to December 31 last (four years and a half) there were discharged from there 36,244 men. Of this number 19,525 accepted the invitation to breakfast, and nearly 8,000 signed the temperance pledge. In addition to this there were discharged from Holloway Prison since taking up our station there on the 4th May last year 3,649, of whom 2,144 accepted breakfast and 751 signed the pledge."

Mr. Howard Vincent, in an address to a large gathering of men at what has been called a Thieves' Supper, said: "I told you there was no lack of benevolent persons willing to assist you to wipe out the past and attain a respectable place in your sphere. It was only for you and others in like case to come and claim at the hands of this Mission the assistance it was ready to give to any seeker sincere in his desire to reform. The Government have recognised the stability of this Mission by enabling convicts to receive the gratuities earned during their sentence direct through its agency, besides the extra grant of £3 in deserving cases. I have a letter from a well-known Member of Parliament, whose former servant is about to be released from imprisonment for a series of burglaries. He professes to be anxious to reform, and to seek a new life in the colonies. His late master is willing to help him, and through Mr. Wheatley this man will be able to leave all his criminal associations and antecedents behind him at the prison gate. Can it be doubted, then, that to furnish the means for this Mission is one of the best employments money can have? Day after day I have asked Mr. Wheatley to consult with Chief Inspector Neame on the best means of assisting this man or that. He is always ready to do his utmost, however disheartening the task may appear, and I can show in many directions how much good has been done by his agency and how much crime prevented."

A DAY AT THE SEASIDE WITH THE CITY SHOEBLACKS.

THREE in the morning is somewhat early to be moving, yet that was the hour at which the boys in the Home of the Red Shoeblack Society located on Saffron Hill might be seen busily engaged in preparing their toilets for the annual trip to the seaside. By four o'clock, and after all had united in asking God's blessing on the day's outing, they were ready, and, headed by the Hanover Street drum and fife band, away they went towards Liverpool Street Station to catch the paper train for Walton-on-the-Naze, which leaves at 5.10 a.m.

On approaching the Meat Market (which even at that early hour was open), hundreds of brawny, greasy porters might be seen occupied in unloading the large vans full of meat. The busy throng stopped their labours and ran to see the red-coated lads in their brand new uniforms pass; the carmen meanwhile had to look to their horses, for the rattle of the drums, the shrill sound from the fifes, and the fluttering of the flags frightened some of the more spirited animals. How loudly the drums sounded and echoed along the quiet, deserted City streets, and how the slumbering people, awakened thus early by the sound of martial music, rushed to their bedroom windows in sleeping garments of every style and pattern, will long be remembered by all who were present, while the comical appearance presented every now and again by an excited and half-frightened man, with head enveloped in a nightcap and his wife similarly attired, produced roars of laughter amongst the boys, and even those who were disturbed could not help joining in the fun when they saw who had awakened them at such an early hour.

Liverpool Street Station was reached just before 5 a.m., and the train soon steamed away on its journey, amidst the vociferous cheers of the lads.

Walton was reached about 9 a.m., where a bountiful breakfast, consisting of cold roast and boiled beef, ham, tea, and coffee, with new rolls and fresh butter, was awaiting the arrival of the company at the Clifton Hotel.

After breakfast the boys were allowed their liberty till 11.30, during which time many bathed; others strolled along the shore, watching with astonishment the waves as they came rolling and foaming one over the other on the beach, for many of those present had never seen the sea before. When the lads were brought together, some sixty of the number went on board one of the large pleasure yachts for a sail, and to watch the swimming races which it was arranged should be started from off the boat to the shore. The yacht was soon anchored some

500 yards from the beach, and the competitors for the first race were told to get ready, while two men in a small boat, who had been previously engaged, were also told to hold themselves in readiness to follow the swimmers, in case of any accident. The eight lads were soon stripped and ready, and on the word "Go" being given they all dived into the water, and in a few moments were seen struggling very pluckily for the championship of the Society. The race, which was a good one, was won by No. 91.

Other races and games of various kinds filled up the joyous day, the creature comforts following in rapid succession. The boys' appetites being keen and the fare abundant and inviting, and each guest unrestricted as to quantity, you may be sure their dinner and tea met with the same happy dispatch as the breakfast.

A gentleman well known in the City gave each of the lads two shillings to spend, and supplied also forty boxes of delicious plums to be distributed amongst them.

The silver medals and money prizes to the successful competitors in the races and games were distributed by the Hon. A. F. Kinnaird, who, as is his wont, had entered most heartily into the day's sports and amusements.

REAPING.

HOLLOWAY RAGGED SCHOOL.

A TEACHER writes:—"There are twelve dear girls in my class who have recently given their hearts to Christ, and know that they have had all their sins forgiven. There are, besides these, seven who are members of churches, and I hope several others are soon to be brought into the fold."

The following are extracts of two letters from girls written to the superintendent whilst absent from town:—

"We had a happy Sunday. I do pray that every one that comes into our school may take Jesus as their loving Saviour. There are several in our class who have not yet given their hearts to Him; I do trust they may, for we know He is mighty to *save*. . . . . I am sure, dear ——, we can say the closer we come to Jesus the happier we are, because, when filled with His love, we love Him and all around, and do everything to please Him."

The second one is as follows:—"It cheers us to know Jesus is with us; and a little talk with Jesus, how it cheers the rugged road! —how it seems to help us onward!"

But although the writers of the two letters just referred to have

such firm trust, others with us find it difficult to believe. Here is the copy of a letter received about the same time as the others:—

"In answer to your request I write these few lines; it is not good news that I send, though I wish it was. I do not like to keep it away from you any longer. I have not decided yet; there is something that says, Not yet, wait a little while, not to-day. O that I could put that aside, and feel that I was washed in the blood of Jesus! I should be happy. O that I could say that it is 'well with *my* soul.' I am like that little book says—I have been trying to save myself. I have been wandering in paths that do not lead to the way of life. I have no faith. I should not tell you this, only I know you would be very grieved to think I kept silent after your kind advice. I thank you very much for the little book you sent me."

Sometimes we have our troubles and disturbances. On one occasion the superintendent had to shut the door against one of the rougher girls of the school, and whilst so doing she used language very painful to hear. On the Tuesday evening following this letter was handed to the superintendent:—

"I write these lines to say that I am very sorry for last Sunday evening and for what I said. I hope you'll forgive me; I know I was doing wrong, but I could not help it. I hope that Jesus will forgive me all my sins. And I did feel so unhappy when I went home and thought what I had done, and I could not tell my mother what we had been reading about, like I could the Sunday before. P—— says that she will try and keep in the right way, and I will try also, but I find it so hard to keep in the right way."

One of our teachers had occasion to call at the home of one of her scholars, and in the course of conversation the mother of the girl said, "Oh, miss, I do see such a change in my ——. Although I am not a Christian, I like to see others good. What a different home this would be if I were only good!" Our friend pointed her to the Saviour, and, when taking her leave, had the satisfaction of hearing this troubled parent say she would seek Him in the other room on her knees, and would ask for forgiveness.

ANOTHER NOTE OF CHEER.

At a service of song recently held in a Mission Room in Southwark, the musical conductor, responding to a cheering expression of thanks, said:—"I feel it to be a great privilege to do anything I can in the good cause of Ragged Schools. I owe all the good I have in life to its agency. I received my early education in it; as I got on in life

I obtained a prize of 7s. 6d. and a card from Lord Shaftesbury, in Exeter Hall, for faithful work in my situation. Indeed, when I consider what I might have been but for its intervention I am filled with gratitude to God for the benefits I have received, and I am glad to bear public testimony to this feeling." It afterwards transpired that this earnest young Christian has a gift for music, which he has cultivated so well as to be able to act as organist at a neighbouring church. He is also the zealous conductor of a Band of Hope, a Sunday School teacher, and plays the harmonium for an outdoor service. In these days of payment by results is not such work good to the city, the nation, and the church in its social, financial, and spiritual results?

LITTLE THINGS.

ONLY a tiny effort;
Made for the Master I love,
But He saw, and owned, and blessed it,
From His home of peace above.

Only a cup of water;
To that longing thirsty soul,
But it proved the message needed,
"Christ Jesus hath made thee whole."

Only a little flower;
I culled from the garden near,
But it brought both light and comfort
To a heart o'erwhelmed with fear.

Only a smile of welcome;
To that timid stranger child,
But she nestled close beside me,
No longer lonely and wild.

Only a sudden impulse;
Of affection strong and real,
But it saved an erring brother,
From a wrong which none could heal.

Only a prayer for guidance;
Nay, sometimes only a sigh,
But it brings us showers of blessing
From our Father's throne on high.

L. G.

MAGIC-LANTERNS AND FRENCH HAND ORGAN.

THE winter session of 1882-3 was an experimental one as regards the use of the office lanterns. The numerous entries in the office diary show that they were in constant use. The experiment goes far to prove that for giving an evening's profitable amusement nothing is better than a good magic-lantern entertainment. It will be remembered that Lord Shaftesbury generously provided the Union with several lanterns for free use in the affiliated Schools and Missions. A circular was issued in September, 1882, offering the use of these lanterns free of charge for entertainments during the winter months. The officers of many schools availed themselves of this offer, while several school workers subscribed and bought a lantern for their own school. The number of exhibitions given by our lanterns during the last season was between seventy and eighty, and the estimated number of children and adults present at these exhibitions, who have been profitably amused, is over 15,000.

The winter session of 1883 is now at hand; we therefore beg to remind the superintendents and workers of the Missions, when they draw up their plans for winter amusements, that the Ragged School Union lanterns will again be available, subject to the undermentioned conditions.

"At least a fortnight's previous notice must be given, and in making the application please give size of room and other particulars. The lanterns can be used singly, or conjointly for dissolving views, with oil or lime and gas. If the limelight is required, the gas must be provided by the school; if used with oil-light, the best paraffin oil (only) to be used, and great care with the lanterns is necessary at all times. The oil-chambers must be emptied after use. The apparatus must be called for on the day arranged, and returned to the office the following morning; the expense of porterage to and fro being wholly defrayed by the school using the lantern. All breakages and losses must be made good. The collection of slides is miscellaneous, and includes—'The Two Apprentices' (Hogarth), 'Dick Whittington,' 'Mother Hubbard,' 'Tale of the Five Pigs,' 'John Gilpin,' natural history, nursery tales, chromatropes, moveable slides, hymns, &c. If necessary, a complete set of slides for a lecture or entertainment can be borrowed from the London Stereoscopic Company, Regent Street, free of charge, on presenting a written order from the office."

It should be understood that the office cannot hold itself ready to meet any request further than as regards the *loan of the apparatus*. If the services of a lecturer or operator should be required the utmost will be done to oblige, but notice must be given on making the application to Mr. Kirk at the office, Exeter Hall, W.C.

The organ, too, has not been idle. Some of the Missions have had pleasant music discoursed to the children at the entertainments by means of this novel instrument, which can be had under the same conditions as the lanterns as to time, safety, and porterage. It is earnestly hoped that the winter season of 1883-4 will see a still larger development of healthful amusement, and that the means for furnishing this wholesome delight and instruction will be used to the fullest extent.

"BE YE WARMED."

However much the Committee of the Ragged School Union may desire to see poor shivering children cured of their shivering by putting them into garments sufficient to withstand the winter's cold, such desire cannot be accomplished without the means. It is therefore hoped that a due supply of clothing and material for boys and girls will be sent to the Secretary, at the Office, Exeter Hall, London.

PRESENTATIONS.

West Greenwich Ragged School.

The pleasure attending the children's outing to Hayes Common was this year considerably increased by the presence of C. H. Pierson, Esq., the treasurer of the school, who had been laid aside by severe illness. The occasion was taken advantage of by the friends, who presented him with an illuminated address bound in leather, and a very handsome Bible bearing the following inscription: "Presented to Henry C. Pierson, Esq., by the Sunday School teachers and scholars of the West Greenwich Ragged School, after twenty years' loving service, 4th July, 1883."

Marigold Place.

Two interesting presentations have been recently made in connection with this school.

The first consisted of a purse of money and a birthday book, the recipient being Mr. Herbert Millington, a gentleman who for some years has acted as secretary to the teachers, and for a longer period one of the most earnest among the workers in the Mission. Mr. Millington, who was on the eve of sailing for Australia, was given with the more visible gift all sorts of good wishes and kind words, which he heartily reciprocated in a pleasant speech. There was a very good attendance.

The second was a marriage present made to Mr. Hodges, the secretory of Stephen the Yeoman. This was also the occasion of a very kindly gathering. The testimonial in this case took the form of a handsome timepiece, which in the name of the teachers, and with no end of good wishes accompanying it, was presented to Mr. Hodges by the Superintendent, who presided. Mr. Hodges most ably responded.

NELSON STREET.

Recently the teachers of the Sunday Afternoon School presented their Superintendent, Mr. W. S. Andrews, with a Bible, as a token of esteem.

The workers of the Mission, and the friends connected with the three open-air services held weekly in the district, also made a presentation to Mr. and Mrs. John Kirk of two handsome leather armchairs, as an expression of kindly feeling.

In Memoriam.

MRS. OAKLEY.

MR. T. B. SMITHIES.

MRS. OAKLEY.

MRS. OAKLEY, who for sixteen years laboured in the Rufford's Row Ragged Schools and Mission, 68, Colebrooke Row, Islington, and for the last six years as infant school governess, was called away to her rest on July 23rd, after a very short illness. She retired to rest on Friday night, the 21st, in good health; her husband, when roused at three o'clock on Saturday morning, found she had been smitten with apoplexy, which ended fatally on the following Monday morning—giving every testimony, as in the days of her health and strength, of her trust in Jesus. Her loss is greatly felt by the poor parents and children, among whom she ever delighted to work. Her burial took place at Finchley on Friday, the 27th. The service was conducted by the Rev. A. Ewing, Vicar of St. Peter's, Islington. Many teachers and friends were present on the occasion, anxious to show in such attendance their affection and esteem for the departed.

MR. T. B. SMITHIES.

Mr. Smithies, who died on July 20, at Earlham Grove, Wood Green, in his sixty-eighth year, was a man whose labours in the cause of religion and humanity had made him very dear to all lovers of their kind. He was one whose place will be difficult to fill. His editorship and proprietorship of the *British Workman* had made his name a household word wherever the English language is spoken. The illustrations by eminent artists placed it in the very front rank of illustrated serials. The Ragged School Union is deeply indebted to him for his many gifts of this and other publications for distribution amongst the affiliated schools, and for all his devoted interest in the good cause generally.

Notices of Books.

Cassell's Bible Dictionary. Nearly 600 engravings.

This dictionary, to a thoughtful student of the Divine Word, would be of eminent service. It is printed in large type. The information, which unites fulness with brevity, is conveyed in plain language, and bears directly on the matter in hand.

Heart Chords. Thirteen pocket volumes, neatly bound, price 1s. each. (Cassell and Co., Limited.)

This is a series of books on topics so weighty, and so charmingly treated, as to commend themselves to all who desire their own or others' spiritual welfare. No more suitable present could be made by a parent to a son or daughter. The books embrace such topics as are especially suited for the consideration of Bible Classes. The list comprises "My Work for God," "My Work with God," "My Object in Life," "My Bible," "My Body," "My Soul," "My Father's House," "My Walk with God," "Aids to the Divine Life," &c., &c.

Religious Tract Society's Publications.

A Slip at Starting: Some Folk in our Village; Bernard Kendal's Fortune. Illustrated, 1s. each.

"When Truth embodied in a tale
Shall enter in at lowly doors."

Good lessons gracefully insinuated, and pervaded with religious sentiments.

The Illustrated Leaf. 1s. per 100. *Little Messenger.* 6d. per packet. *The Little Library.* Sixteen books for children, price 4d.

Packets of seeds, for diligent sowers, that may transform the soul from a waste, howling wilderness into the garden of the Lord.

Taking Tales for Cottage Homes. (Griffith and Farran, St. Paul's Churchyard, London.) 64 pages. Price 6d.

Cheap books in large type and easy words conveying simple ideas on subjects likely to excite the interest of the humbler classes, should commend themselves to those who have the oversight of Ragged Schools and Missions, either for use as reading-books for Night Schools or for Library purposes. Some duties arising out of social and family relations are imperfectly understood; these are prettily illustrated and enforced in such tales as "A Bit of Fun," "Hopeful Sam," "Sweethearts," "The Miller of Hill Brook," &c.

The Rosebud Annual. (James Clarke and Co., 13 and 14, Fleet Street, E.C.) 192 pages, elegantly bound, price 4s.

Teachers of Infant Schools, mothers, elder sisters, and all who have to do with the little ones should procure this charming book. Its pretty pictures and stories will dry the eyes of the most fretful child.

I've been a Gipsying; or, Rambles among our Gipsies and their Children in their Tents and Vans. By George Smith, of Coalville. (T. Fisher Unwin, London.)

This book, full of racy jottings from the author's journal, gives the lights and shades of gipsy life, and reveals the ignorance of letters which prevails. A case is mentioned where a gipsy woman would have sent four children to school, but they were not admitted because they could attend for so short a time. This shows the need of a class of schools that will receive them. George Smith has devoted himself with all the ardour of an apostle to gipsies and the canal-boat population. To Christians and philanthropists we say, "Buy this book, read, and pass it on."

Notices of Meetings.

FIELD LANE RAGGED SCHOOLS.

The forty-first annual meeting was held on Wednesday evening, June 20th, at the Holborn Town Hall, the Rev. Jackson Wray in the chair. The Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G., was unable to attend. Mr. Peregrine Platt read the Report, which stated that the Bible Schools and Sewing Class had been attended by a weekly average of 768 children of the old-fashioned Ragged School type; 967 garments had been made in the Sewing Class. The Band of Hope had been attended by an average of 89 members; the total number of members admitted since its commencement being 1,456. The depositors in the Penny Bank numbered 183; the amount paid in during the year had been £50 9s. The Ragged Church Service conducted every Sunday morning had an average attendance of 500. The Sunday Evening Service had been attended by some 120 of the poor persons of the neighbourhood. The Industrial Schools maintained 204 girls and boys. Twenty-one boys and nineteen girls had been placed in situations during the year. The reports of H.M. Deputy Inspector on both schools was very satisfactory. To the Servants' Training Home had been admitted 25 friendless or poor girls, all of whom had been under training for domestic service, and 21 of whom had been placed in situations. The male and female Refuges had received 464 men and women during the year. The number of nights' lodging given had been 14,629, and 201 had been helped to employment or otherwise provided for.

The meeting was addressed by the Rev. F. A. Lillingstone, M.A., the Rev. G. W. M'Cree, Dr. H. Sinclair Paterson, T. Harley, F.R.A.S., Rev. R. P. Downes, Messrs. T. Chadwick and R. H. Moore.

THE GOLDEN LANE DONKEY SHOW.

A stranger, who had happened to have alighted in the neighbourhood of Wilmer's Gardens, Hoxton, on Monday evening, July 2, would have found the coster fraternity inhabiting that unrural region in a state of unwonted excitement, consequent on the holding of a donkey and pony show in the interests of their order, and at which Lord Shaftesbury was chief judge. The exhibition came off in connection with Mr. W. J. Orsman's Golden Lane Mission. Originally started with a view of improving the condition of the animals used by the street traders of the metropolis, it has thoroughly accomplished its purpose, as a sight of the exhibits in the yard amply sufficed to testify. The show was the largest and the best which has yet been held; and the costers, who were ranged around the confined space, were, not without reason, a little proud of their own respectable appearance, and of the more than respectable appearance of their four-footed subordinates. There were ninety-eight entries, and while the animals bore the appearance of good grooming and good feeding, their names were suggestive of the

predilection of their owners; for example, Polly and Tommy, Jumbo and Sambo; and the ages ranged from one to forty years. They were all suitably decorated for the occasion, and by their self-satisfied looks seemed to be quite aware that the occasion was a high one. The rule is to give 5s. to every exhibitor, the money for the most part being found by one lady interested in the matter. Before the meeting, Lord Shaftesbury, accompanied by Lady Edith Ashley, walked round the yard, and were greatly interested. The attention of the earl was especially attracted by Tommy, aged forty, and on his asking Coster Eden as to the use such an aged donkey could be in the world, the man answered, "Why, he walks about and plays with the children." Later on, the philanthropic peer expressed the wish that all the children in London had no worse companions than an old donkey. Leaving the show, the noble lord took the chair at a public meeting in the hall, which was densely crowded. A brief statement was made by Mr. W. J. Orsman, who said that after twenty-two years of work he felt like a veteran. The mission had been started for the purpose of carrying the Gospel to the poor without sensational accompaniments. The removal from Golden Lane had been an experiment, but the step had been justified by the result. They had 600 children in the Sunday School; and in addition to the usual Sabbath services and other week-night assemblies, they had three meetings for Bible study every week. The costers, who also met there for business purposes, had £620 in the bank on account of their club. One of the evils of the neighbourhood was shown to be overcrowding; and what they wanted was good wholesome dwellings for a poorer class than those reached by the Peabody Fund. Mr. Orsman also referred to the debt of £320 still remaining on the building, for when that was removed he purposed undertaking other branches of work. After addresses by Dr. Wainwright and Coster Wilkins, the Earl of Shaftesbury remarked that the day was a happy one for Mr. Orsman, and well it might be after twenty years of progress. The costers of Golden Lane were once most lawless, but now they were among the most orderly of the people, and the influence of their good example was felt all over London. The earl asked if any stable in the country could show a better selection of animals than they had looked upon that evening. Shortly after nine, the earl and Lady Edith retired amid the cheers of the multitude within and without the building; and the meeting was continued for a short time longer under the presidency of Sir Robert Carden.

LAYING THE CORNER STONE OF THE NEW REFUGE AT STRANGEWAYS.

Lord Shaftesbury visited in Manchester on Saturday, July 7th, to lay the corner stone of a new building forming an enlargement of the Central Boys' and Girls' Refuge. From the railway station to the place of meeting the streets were thronged with people. The route was gay with banners and decorated arches bearing the words of welcome. When Lord Shaftesbury and the Mayor drove up they were greeted with loud and hearty cheers. The Mayor conducted the noble lord to his post, and took the chair.

The new building forms part of a scheme which, besides the present addition to the central refuge, embraced an extension of the orphan homes department. There are at present in the Home about 70 boys, and when the new building is finished there will be room for 50 more. The basement of the new building will be provided with a swimming bath, and on the top floor will be a large lecture hall. A playground also is provided.

The Mayor said he could assure their distinguished guest, on the part of the authorities, and equally of the population of this city, of a most hearty welcome to the scene of his labours, which had been attended with such happy results in past days.

Mr. Leonard K. Shaw asked Lord Shaftesbury's acceptance of the trowel, which bore the inscription: "Presented to the Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G., on the occasion of laying the corner stone of the new building of the Boys' and Girls' Refuge, Manchester, July 7, 1883," and underneath was the text, "His children shall have a place of refuge." Commencing thirteen years ago, the Institution had gone on year after year steadily growing, each year adding a Home to its number. There are now 13 Homes sheltering and providing for 300 children.

CHILDREN'S DEMONSTRATION IN THE FREE-TRADE HALL, MANCHESTER.

On Monday, July 9, a remarkable demonstration in honour of Lord Shaftesbury took place in the Free Trade Hall. The arrangements were chiefly under the control of the committees of the Manchester and Salford Ragged School Union and the Boys' and Girls' Refuges. The hall was filled nearly an hour before the commencement of the proceedings, the gallery being occupied by about 2,000 of the children attending the schools in connection with the Manchester and Salford Ragged School Union, the body of the room being crowded principally by older persons, many of whom are actively engaged in Sunday School work. When the chairman (Mr. Richard Johnson) and his lordship were seen ascending the platform the audience arose and gave vent to most enthusiastic cheers, the bands at the same time playing "Auld Lang Syne."

Mr. Alderman Hopkinson, the Mayor of Manchester, presided, and in his opening remarks referred to the efforts of Lord Shaftesbury to ameliorate the condition of the poor children.

Mr. R. B. Taylor, who represented the Boys' and Girls' Refuges and Children's Aid Society, spoke of the origin and beneficial work of those organisations.

Mr. Joseph Snape, Secretary of the Manchester and Salford Ragged School Union, stated that it was his duty to welcome Lord Shaftesbury on behalf of the 700 workers who were connected with the Union and the 10,000 children who attended the various schools attached to that organisation.

Mr. T. Jackson, Governor of the Ardwick Industrial School, after giving a brief history of the growth of the industrial school movement in Manchester, stated that about 85 per cent. of the children who passed through the industrial schools in this city were doing well.

Mr. Frank Fearneley, who was

heartily greeted, delivered a brief address as the representative of the "Band of Kindness."

The next part of the proceedings consisted in the presentation of an address by four children—two boys and two girls—led by Mr. Thomas Johnson, of Charter Street Ragged School. The address was beautifully illuminated, and enclosed in a handsome gilt frame. As the children passed along the front of the platform, bearing what to them was a considerable burden, the bands of the Industrial Schools struck up "The Fine Old English Gentleman," and the audience cheered most heartily. Mr. Johnson referred to the services rendered by Lord Shaftesbury in behalf of little children, and assured him of the welcome which the children of Manchester gave him. The address, which bore the signatures of the representatives of the schools, the Mayor, and the Chairman of the meeting, contained the following passages:—"We beg most respectfully to offer your lordship a hearty welcome to Manchester, and whilst expressing our sincere admiration of your high character, and our cordial appreciation of your noble efforts on behalf of oppressed and suffering children, we remember that for the greater part of the present century your powerful influence has been given to every philanthropic effort that has had for its aim the release of little children from the bondage of cruelty, ignorance, and oppressive toil. And we recall with pleasure and pride the numberless instances in which your patronage and powerful advocacy have resulted in legislative interference for the protection of the child-workers of our land.

The Chairman, in presenting the address, said a few hearty and most appropriate words, which were gracefully responded to by his lordship.

THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY AT OAK LODGE.

The annual visit of the inmates of the Refuges connected with King Edward Schools took place on Monday, July 16th, at Oak Lodge, Highgate, the residence of the esteemed treasurer, Mr. H. R. Williams. There are 200 girls in these homes, one of which is situated at Albert Sreet, Mile End. and the other at Andrew's Road, Cambridge Heath. Prizes to the amount of £40 were given away by the Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G., who was in excellent health and spirits. On behalf of the children, the Rev. R. C. Billing, M.A. (Vicar of Spitalfields and Rural Dean), proposed, and Mr. W. P. Bodkin, J.P., seconded, a vote of thanks for the kindness shown to them throughout the day. Mr. H. R. Williams moved, and the Rev. Dr. M. Green seconded, a cordial vote of thanks to the Earl of Shaftesbury.

NELSON STREET.

The accommodation has been materially increased here by the addition of an adjoining cottage, which has been most kindly granted for our use, free of rent, by the landlord. The opening meeting took place on Monday, September 10.

SOMERS TOWN.

This school, which has for some time been held in a Board building, is now happily housed in a structure in Canal Road, King's Cross, which has been adapted and fitted with every convenience at a cost of about £100.